

# LOADSTAR LETTER

\$1.50 Volume 1 Number 1 July 1993 Serving The LOADSTAR Community, Worldwide

## LOADSTAR's GENie Connection

LOADSTAR has a support area on *GENie*. In our support area you can leave questions about tough problems with programs, leave general comments for *LOADSTAR FORUM*, or just chat with us!

Signing up is quite painless. Just use your favorite terminal program to dial 1-800-838-8369 (Canadian users dial 1-800-387-8330). Once connected, type "HHH". At the U#= prompt type "xtx99018,commrt".

LOADSTAR's product support is located in *GENie*'s *FLAGSHIP* (C-64/128) section of *GENie*. Our BBS category is 14 and our software library is #26. Once you're logged on to *GENie*, just type "*FLAGSHIP*". You'll be taken straight to the Commodore connection.

*GENie* will take you through a series of questions to help you sign on. As of July 1, 1993, *GENie*'s monthly fee will be just \$8.95. *GENie* is available 24 hours per day. You'll be charged \$3.00 per hour from 6 PM to 7AM with up to four free hours per month awarded automatically. 8AM to 5:59 is considered prime time, and is \$18 per hour except on weekends and holidays. Naturally you'll want to avoid prime time access. You must have a checking account or a major credit card. All payments are electronic. If you're

not prepared to pay \$15 to \$50 per month, toll BBSing is not for you. The real addicts pay up to \$500 per month and more! Watch these people are online most every night -- all night.

Keep track of your *GENie* bill by typing \*bill. You can get a VERY detailed billing report, going back months. I typically pay between \$7.00 and \$20.00 per month, but some *GENie* junkies might pay hundreds. I've seen it happen on *Qlink*. There is a lot you can do on *GENie*. Plenty of people to meet, and plenty of things to download.

If you're an ex-Qlinker, *GENie* might seem a bit techy at first. You might feel like everyone online is smarter than you. You're in a pure BBS environment, with no dedicated program to guide neophytes through every step. It takes a while to get used to it. Fortunately there are programs online that provide a dedicated C-64 or 128 interface. You can contact me on *GENie* as J.Jones36. Fender is F.Tucker3. I log on just about everyday between 10:00 and 12:00 midnight CST. Fender logs on intermittently, so if you want a swift answer, Email me. Sometimes I join in the real time conference at around 10:30. Drop me a line -- please. ■

## CMD Acquires Run's Techmedia Inventory

As most readers probably know, IDG, the high Sheriffs of RUN magazine suddenly decided that they'd spent enough time supporting the 8-bit field. With Creative Micro Design's acquisition of IDG's TechMedia, IDG has now completely shed their 8-bit Commodore feathers. CMD now has an impressive inventory of C-64/128 software and hardware, including GEOS, TIMEWORKS, ABACUS DR. T's, modems, XETEC interfaces, games, and a list of products that seem to run right off the fax sheet. Besides being one of the only sources of new and innovative hardware for the C-64, CMD is becoming one of the largest suppliers of Commodore software.

The new sales department has been open for business since June 1, 1993. Contact CMD at 1-413-525-0023 for more information. ■

## Qlink Continues To Dwindle

In *Qlink*'s heyday, it was better than *GENie*, mainly because it had a better, more comprehensive interface. Nowadays, with chronic bugs online, services terminated, unresponsiveness to complaints, new uploads caught in multi-month-long bottlenecks... If you want to hear customers complaining, just log onto *Qlink*. While *Qlink* is still an intoxicating and engaging experience, there is no question that *Qlink* is a shadow of its former glorious self. For instance while there have been many new uploads in the past two years, (some of them from *LOADSTAR*, it is *Qlink*'s official policy not to inform users of the new uploads. If you want to download something new, you have to find it yourself. But that hasn't been a problem as of late since there are no new uploads. People have been uploading, but the files haven't been made "live" since the new year. Qlinkers have been so frustrated that there was an organized "boycott" on May 1, 1993, when an undetermined number of people agreed not to log on. Here's a major part of what initiated the boycott:

Continued on page 5 →



# User Group Policy

Recently Fender showed me two newsletters that made a disturbing announcement to its members: They had just gotten in the latest LOADSTAR and were ready to copy it to any member. We decided that we shouldn't come on like gangbusters. After all, these were happy customers, probably oblivious to the laws they were breaking! I've substituted the name, "Groupster" for the real Qlink address of the member I spoke with on Qlink because he's nicer than he seems in following text.. I'm "Futuretech" on Qlink and "J.Jones36" on GENie. The mail from The Groupster is verbatim.

**Mail From: FutureTech: Saturday 13-Feb-93 21:49**

We are concerned about the copying practices mentioned on your newsletters. They appear to be in violation of our user group agreement.

**Mail From: Groupster: Saturday 13-Feb-93 21:54**

Greetings: Well, as I understood the legal niceties of things, if our users group subscribed to LS, we could then provide copies of LS to the members of the group and ONLY to members of the group, for a small fee (which is the only way we could afford to resubscribe to LS). We have made it QUITE clear that any unauthorized distribution of the disks would be dealt with severely. I hope this is acceptable to The Powers That Be at the Tower.

**Mail From: FutureTech: Saturday 13-Feb-93 22:02**

This was not our agreement. In our original user group deal, at least five people had to join, each at 50% off. Each would pay in the pool. We would send a master disk that the user group would copy **ONLY TO THE PRE-PAID MEMBERS**. It was agreed that a small fee could be charged for disk copying. In our current user group deal, at least five members must join in the pool at 30% off. There is no copying involved because we send the disks straight to the members' homes like regular subscribers. What you're doing is illegal. **PLEASE CEASE THIS ACTIVITY IMMEDIATELY!**

**Mail From: Groupster: Saturday 13-Feb-93 22:09**

OK, we'll stop it, but be aware that due to the fact that no one individually in the group can afford an LS sub, we cannot resubscribe to LS in '94. In other words, that's \$90.00 that SoftDisk won't be getting next year.

**Mail From: FutureTech: Saturday 13-Feb-93 22:10**

If we spend \$90 annually in the process of combatting piracy, so be it. Piracy DOES hurt Softdisk. It's money out of our pocket. And I bet you wouldn't make that crack about a loss of revenue to Capitol Records if you had been illegally copying their releases. It doesn't matter that you purchased the original when you're selling illegal copies.

**Mail From: Groupster: Saturday 13-Feb-93 22:17**

Well, not to engage in the Old Debate about software copying, but... it seems to me that if the users group as an entity, buys LS and then allows the members who contributed to purchase that subscription to make copies for their own use, I can't see where LS is losing any money, in that if the users group didn't

subscribe, but pirated LS as we could have easily done, via 'a friend of a friend' from out of state, LS wouldn't have gotten the almost \$200 we've spent on LS already. Frankly, it strikes me as being damn petty to moan and piss over the fact that a few poor (and I mean POOR) users donate a few bucks a month over a year so they can get LS, and that LS is not getting \$90.00 from these few users. So, I'll mention this at the next meeting that while LS is in the club library, no one can copy it. I guess we'll just have to allow them to bring it home and ask them not to make copies of it when no one is looking. Be Keying You!

**Mail From: FutureTech: Saturday 13-Feb-93 23:31:**

I'd hardly consider this petty. You're breaking the law. All I'm asking you to do is stop your illegal copying. Come on! Be graceful about it. We're the ones who should be pitching a fit about this, not you. ■

## Surge Suppressors



If you've ever noticed lights flickering during storms or live in an area prone to blackouts, you definitely need a surge suppressor. Surges in electricity can cripple your computer power supply as well as stereo and other electronic equipment. Don't be fooled by specs like "overload protected" and "circuit breaker protection". These features are good, but are not surge suppressors. Surge protection keeps a steady flow of power. For instance lightning may strike and you may suddenly go up to 400 volts because of a grid surge in your neighborhood. With a surge suppressor, you still get around 120 volts. With a mere circuit breaker, you'd be completely vulnerable to any damage the surge causes. Once last year we had a brown out after a flash of lightning. My computer has a surge suppressor. Fender's didn't. His system reset and he lost his work. My system was unaffected. I hurriedly saved my work and shut off my system.

There are also surge suppressors for telephone lines that can keep your modem from becoming an Xmodem (pardon the pun) if your line is struck by lightning. If you already have a surge suppressor and need more outlets, a plain extension cord will pass along the surge protection when plugged into your protector. Mind you this is no

license to go and overload a circuit!

Back in 1988 I paid a whopping \$30 for my surge suppressor, but don't pay more than \$10 for yours. Pass Radio Shack on this one. Check out Wal-Mart, Kmart, Tenex and other discount houses for the best prices. If you can grab one for four to seven dollars, it's a good, long-term investment. ■

# Caught In The Disk ID Trap?



by Jeffrey L. Jones

It's been a long time since I've heard anyone mention that old warning to use unique IDs on every disk that you format. A disk ID consists of the two characters that you use when you format any disk:

OPEN 15,8,15,"N0:DISKNAME,ID  
or  
@N0:DISKNAME,ID

The ID characters can be any alphanumeric combination, and each disk you format should carry an ID that's as random as humanly possible. What you're trying to do is minimize the possibility of inserting disks with identical names one after the other. Your 1541/71 writes to a disk, it reads the B.A.M. (Block Allocation Map) into RAM and begins writing files to the sectors on your disk that it "knows" are free. Well if you pull out one disk and insert another with the same ID, your drive assumes that you've re-inserted the previous disk and keeps that same B.A.M. in memory. So if you save a file onto that second disk, chances are, it will be written to sectors that aren't really free -- especially if the disk was near-full.

A couple of months ago, we lost an entire side of LOADSTAR to this! I had a disk in my 1571 with an ID of "S3" and Fender handed me LOADSTAR #107, Side 3 with an ID of "S3". When I copied my program to Side 3, it wiped out the disk and replaced the B.A.M. with the BAM of my work disk. If it can happen to us, it can happen to you. ■

## Randomizing Arrays

Mail From: BISHOP Date: Saturday 13-Feb-93 A small programming question: How can I get DATA statements randomized? After months of study, questioning, and overall irritation I am no closer to the solution.

Mail From: FutureTech Date: Monday 15-Feb-93 Simple! Just read your DATA statements into an array, then index your array with a shuffled numeric array. A simple card shuffling routine would do. Here's how you'd scramble the numbers 1-100:

```
199 rem fill array with 1-100
200 for i = 1 to 100
210 a(i) = i
220 next
230 rem shuffle the array
240 for i = 1 to 100
250 x = rnd(0)*100+1
260 a = a(i)
270 a(i) = a(x)
280 a(x) = a
290 next
300 return
```

Now you can index your data statements via da\$(a(i)) instead of da\$(i). Since it's just about impossible (and slower) to randomize DATA statements, you're randomizing the way you index them. You're getting your data in truly random order by simply incrementing i. Understand that the array, a() is shuffled now and there is no need to index it via an RND(0) number or to keep track of the items selected so far. That means no pauses!

This particular routine is fast, and does recursive placement. An item may be shuffled many times before the loop is finished. For instance slot 1 may be randomly moved to slot 14. Later slot 14 will be moved! Perhaps it may ping-pong to slot 32 or even back to slot 1! Note that you can't rule that out and still call the routine a "randomizer". If you want to shuffle the array again, say for another game, just GOSUB 240. ■

## 1-800-BBS-NUMBERS

WARNING. I downloaded this information from DAN'S DEN, here in Shreveport. Softdisk is in no way responsible if you log onto one of these numbers and armed, black-suited men knock on your door. Daniel Tobias is a Softdisk employee who runs a full-time BBS from his home. He asks all of you F8N1 BBSers to dial up and join him at: 1-318-424-9260 24 hours a day.

I've dialed all numbers with a voice phone to verify a modem. If you don't get a welcome message, leave these guys alone. They're **paying** for these calls.

453-4794: Compuserve, 624-2723: NBIAP, National Bio Impact Assessment Project. 828-6321: Xerox. 1-800-624-2723: The National Biological Impact Assessment Program (NBIAP) is designed to facilitate safe evaluation of the

continued on page 4



# Up Close, With Eric Lee

programs to help edit and display them.

There aren't many C-64/128 users who haven't heard of *THE WRITE STUFF* and *THE WRITE STUFF 128*. *THE WRITE STUFF* is my word processor of choice, packed with flawless features, some of which are missing from more expensive packages. *THE WRITE STUFF* is how Eric Lee makes his living. He does nothing else on the side. A true entrepreneur. Let's hear him speak:

LS: What year did you launch Busy-Bee Software?

Eric: In 1987 with only *THE WRITE STUFF*.

LS: Did you have an array of beta testers or did you do it all yourself?

Eric: I belonged to a user's group. It helped a lot.

LS: What had been your career?

Eric: I was an instructional assistant during which time I went to a computer seminar and saw an *APPLE* talking word processor for about \$300. I thought that it should have been possible to do the same thing with *S.A.M.* on the Commodore 64. I spent the next year and a half coding *THE WRITE STUFF*.

LS: Looking at the myriad of features built into *THE WRITE STUFF*, one would think you were either highly exposed to word processing or took a course. What was your exposure?

Eric: I used *EASY SCRIPT*. When I was coding *THE WRITE STUFF*, I thought of all the features I would like to

have that were missing in *EASY SCRIPT*. I resisted learning machine language for the job, but found that I had much better control with it.

LS: And when you released this marvel on the market, how did it sell?

Eric: Sales have been gradually declining, but I'm still doing well. I called what I did, "userware". I sold user groups a master copy, a manual and labels and sold the right to copy X number of registered disks. That way they could make a couple of bucks for the copying. My success is largely due to user groups.

LS: With the advent of the new *CMD* devices, are you aiming higher, going for more modular software that loads in the portions it needs, like *GEOS* does?

Eric: Yes. I thought of that, but I don't know what percentage of users out there have that type of hardware.

LS: Most Commodore user groups are dedicated 8-biters, shunning the *IBM*, *MAC*, even Commodore's own *AMIGA* (which I think is a bit excessive). How do you feel about the 16-bit world?

Eric: Some of our members have gone over to the *IBM*. I plan on sticking with the C-64 and 128.

LS: Why did you choose the C-64 to start your line of software and services?

Eric: Basically because I had one.

LS: Are you a 64 lover, a 128 lover who hates to even see the 64 side or are you a lover of both modes?

Eric: I better appreciate the 80-column screens of the 128.

LS: I'm a 64 lover myself. The 128 isn't as fun.

Eric: I intend to keep supporting the Commodore 64. I'm trying to hang in there. Too bad *RUN* ceased publication. Now there are virtually no avenues for developers to advertise.

LS: Who knows? Maybe our newsletter may sprout into a full fledged magazine. We're seeking advertisers now. Perhaps if we can find enough advertisers, we can justify a full-time editor for this newsletter, which is now coming out of my bedroom.

LS: Tell me, do you have any new projects?

Eric: I guess I should mention my compugraphic-type fonts for *THE WRITE STUFF*. I have fonts that are about 500 pixels high that can be scaled down to most any size. A 500 pixel high font on a 360x360 dpi printer is over an inch high. People can break out of *THE WRITE STUFF*'s normal printing and print the scaled fonts, making nifty headers. LS: When they're scaled down very small like in condensed pica, are they very readable?

Eric: Oh yes! They retain their shape. We're also going to publish about 10,000 *PRINT SHOP* graphics along with

LS: I'm looking forward to your new products. I wish you much luck. Keep on coding!

Eric: I'll code as long as there's a market for my products. ■

## 1-800-BBS-NUMBERS

performance of genetically modified organisms in the environment. **THE IDIOT BOX** actually wants you to call! 1-800-27-IDIOT and 1-800-766-1720. **WTIE** 1-800-544-1936: part of the U.S. E.P.A. project called Small Flows. **WEATHER BANK** 1-800-827-2727. **USGS** 1-800-358-2663. **Earthquake Information**. **DUNSNET** 1-800-365-4636 Access phone directory. **DELPHI** 1-800-365-4636 At password enter "SHOPPER". **INSTANT COMPUTING** 1-800-553-5509. **RCA** 1-800-526-3714. No information. **EASYLINK** 1-800-325-4112. **DIALCOM** 1-800-624-2914. **GRAPHNET** 1-800-621-1411. **DATA LYNX** 1-800-358-0486. **USA SPORTS WORLD** 1-800-654-2319. **DESKTOP** 1-800-228-3832 Desktop support **BBS**. **RECOM** 1-800-221-1459. **DUAT** 1-800-767-9989. **PIN** 1-800-248-1038

Thanks to "The Connection" BBS, (919) 967-9464 and The Manasota Commodore User's Group for originally compiling this information. ■

Creative Pixels Ltd. presents  
For the Commodore 64/128 in 64 mode



## ESCAPE ROUTE

### THE ADVENTURES OF ERIC HAWTHORNE, P.I.

The Apex Detective Agency has been assigned the case of recovering the rare Acme diamond, which has been stolen by the infamous Icelady! The chief has assigned you, Eric Hawthorne, to cover the case! You have just three weeks to recover the gem! A new game for the Commodore 64, Escape Route is a combination of the B movies genres of the 50s and 60s. There are elements of detective, comedy, horror, and Ninja movies woven throughout the game. The game is a combination of arcade, strategy, and board games. Numerous multicolor bitmaps are used throughout. This game will make a great addition to your Commodore 64 library!



## ISLAND OF THE DRAGONS

Island of the Dragons is a new action/adventure/role playing game for the Commodore 64. Hi-res multicolor graphics give the program an Amiga-like look. The game plays as an interactive novel or movie with a plot that unfolds as you play. Your plane crashes on an island that is inhabited and ruled by dragons! You will learn the secret origins of these beasts and their link with the prehistoric past. You must rescue your girlfriend who has been captured by evil forces, and you will befriend the gold dragons who will help you on your quest. Explore caverns and battle prehistoric creatures as you attempt to locate your girlfriend and learn the secrets of the island. Great graphics and a unique storyline helps make this new game a must for your Commodore 64 library

Send check or money order for **\$19.95** for each game to:

**Creative Pixels Ltd.**

PO Box 592

Library, PA 15129

### QLINK CONTINUED

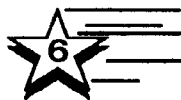
*"OPINION POLL IS COMING DOWN ON 2/17 The last weekly Q-Link opinion poll will be posted on February 10, and the results will be posted on February 17. After this date, there will no longer be a weekly opinion poll. We would like to thank everyone for their participation in the opinion poll over the past few years. The numerous topic suggestions submitted every week helped to produce interesting and timely polls. We encourage you to explore the other areas of the Express Yourself area that allow members to express their opinions and stay up-to-date on current events. These areas include: \* General Debate Board \* Hot Topics \* Theological Debate Board \* USA Today Issues & Debates"*

This may seem like a small loss, but the BBS that accompanied the poll was always a hot spot for debate, even more popular than the general and theological debate boards. Now *Qlink* has dissolved the trivia staff, which was immensely popular in two areas of *Qlink* -- so popular in fact that I couldn't enter the trivia rom all night last week because it *stayed* full.

With the demise of *Commodore Magazine*, *RUN*, and the contraction of *Compute!*'s *Gazette*, *Qlink* has a chance to move into the forefront as a source of information and software for millions of C-64 users. I hope they take that opportunity. A C-64 BBS is a terrible thing to waste. ■

## NEXT ISSUE!

- A review of the *CANON BJ-5* bubble jet printer, with print samples and in-depth advice on finding the right paper.
- A review of the *BOSS Dr. Synth DS-330*, an inexpensive but powerful MIDI device.
- Tough talk about government spying on private BBSs.
- More programming and general computer talk.
- More of your letters.
- UP CLOSE with the folks at Creative Micro Designs.
- More news from the Commodore world.
- Tips for new users.
- And of course Jeff takes the Soapbox.



# LOADSTAR FORUM

Dear LOADSTAR:

Where is my issue? Why are you guys getting slower and slower? Don't you think it's time to give us one issue per month? Let's have that issue soon, okay? **LOADSTAR** is, and will always be my favorite software and the Commodore will always be my favorite computer.

There hasn't been much written about the **GEORAM** cartridge expanded to 2MB. I've had one for 16 months now and everything has worked fine to date. I can have more than a whole 1581 **GEOS** disk in RAM. My cartridge has been accepted by **GEOS** as device 10. File access is very fast.

LeRoy Sandfer  
Wilmington, CA

**LS:** Actually **LOADSTAR** is the only **SOFTDISK** department that's ahead of schedule. In the past we were usually right on time mastering each issue. Sometimes we'd be a little late. In any case, **LOADSTAR** is published 12 times per year. If you try to guess what day of the months we arrive, it's best to make your guess different each month. **GEORAM** is neat, but second string to a real **REU** which is universal and faster because of **DMA**. But I had no idea that **GEORAMs** were being converted. That's great. I'll say it again: If you're a **GEOS** user, you'll become a **GEOS** lover if you add an **REU** or a **GEORAM** unit.

Dear **LOADSTAR**,

**HELP!** I'm trying to place several issues of **LOADSTAR** on **CMD** floppies. The disks have been formatted into two partitions with over 2500 blocks free in each. I have

no problem copying to the first partition, but when I use **ISSUE COPIER** on the second partition, I can't access it from the menu. I've gotten around this by using **FD-TOOLS** to change the default partition. That way if I just copy the issue to the "current partition", **ISSUE COPIER** works. But what am I doing wrong with the file requestor?

C. Paul Topa  
Monson, MA

**LS:** You're doing nothing wrong. When you get a partition menu with **LOADSTAR's** current standard file requestor, you can't access the bottom partition. This is because current **RL** and **FD DOS** no longer send a final three bytes of data that the requestor was accustomed to. This incompatibility isn't fixed yet. The fix I use is to always create an extra 256-block partition. If your main partitions take up all available room, you can delete one and re-create it 256 blocks smaller to make room for a dummy partition. I'm sure you're going to love **LOADSTAR** on your **CMD** floppy drive.

Dear **LOADSTAR**,

There is a bug in **STAR LINKER**, from Issue #105. Programs created with it don't run as fast as they would otherwise.

Earl Harshbarger  
Beta-Tester  
Extra-ordinaire

**LS:** Any program created with **STAR LINKER** must use a **CLR** command before any

variables are declared. Even if you don't use variables, a **CLR** command is mandatory. I would have built a **CLR** into **STAR LINKER**, but had no idea the problem existed because all the programs I tested it on either didn't declare variables or already had **CLRs** in them. Sorry about that. ☺

Dear **LOADSTAR**,

I thought **LOADSTAR** #105 was a great utilities disk. I found the information on it valuable as a programmer. I've seen no programming books for the C-64. I'm interested in learning machine language and I know that I'll need an assembler, but I haven't the

faintest clue how to begin. Can you help?

Lawrence C. Bell  
Idaho Falls, ID

**LS:** We've covered a lot of programming ground on **LOADSTAR**, and we're compiling a **PROGRAMMING** disk, full of information and tools. On **Genie** you can download two very informative files that touch on **BASIC** as well as machine language. You can also turn to **CMD** now for books and assemblers. Also search for "assembler", "ML", and "COMVIEW" with **LOADSTAR LIBRARY**. You might already own what you need to get started! ■

**REU users:** Battery Back any 17xx or **GEORAM** with the **BBU**. Use with **GEOS** (V1.3 & up), **RAMDOS** or other programs that use **REUs**. Great for **BBS**. No heavy power supply needed.  
**GEOS users:** **BBGRam**, Battery backed **RAM** for **GEOS 2.0**. A fast reliable alternative to mechanical drives. Supports all drive types, multiple partitions and alternate desktops.

## PERFORMANCE PERIPHERALS, Inc.

5 Upper Loudon Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

US orders, literature: 800-925-9774.

Tech support orders FAX: 518-436-0485

**BBU \$59, BBGRam 512K \$89, BBGRam 1M \$119 BBGRam 2M \$159**

US S&H \$6. US COD \$4. Canada & Mexico S&H \$10 Other \$19



30 day money back guarantee. 90 day warranty

Master Card/Visa welcome



# CLASSIFIEDS

Got a printer, disk drive or hard drive you want to get rid of? Something you need? Just want to make an announcement? Well you can place a classified ad in **LOADSTAR's** newsletter for only .75 per word. Your name address and phone number are not counted as words. Send your ad, with computed payment, to: **LOADSTAR CLASSIFIEDS**, P.O. Box 30008, Shreveport, LA 71130-0008.



# CMD Sets Pace for 1993 with New Products and Lower Prices

## CMD Offers One-Stop Shopping to Commodore Owners

Effective May 1, 1993 CMD acquired all rights to RUN software and has purchased all items from their inventory. As result, CMD will be offering one of the largest selections of Commodore 64/128 software and hardware available today. CMD's decision reinforces its commitment to C-64/128 owners worldwide. It is our hope that we can offer "One Stop Shopping" to Commodore owners. If we don't have it...we can probably find it! Here is a partial list of products. For a complete list call or write for a free catalog.

RUN Mag.- back issues  
RUN/ReRUN software  
Abacus books & software  
GEOS 2.0 & applications  
Timeworks Software  
Superbase & Superscript  
SOGWAP-Big Blue Reader

Microprose games  
Xetec Printer Interfaces  
Electronic Arts Games  
Skyles Electric Works  
Dr. T's Music Software  
Power Supplies  
Miscellaneous Cables

Blank disks - 3.5" & 5.25"  
Misc. IC Chips  
RAM Chips/SIMM's  
... and MUCH More

**NEW**

## CMD Utilities A Powerful and Unique Collection of Disk Utilities for Commodore and CMD Storage Devices

**FCOPY+** A two drive file copier featuring 1541, 71, 81, REU and CMD device compatibility which is capable of copying any size PRG, SEQ, REL, USR File. **NEW** features include:

*Scratch/Unscratch Files • Copy/Delete C128 Boot Sector • Disk/Partition UnNew • File Compare • Access DOS Commands thru Menus • Lock/Unlock Files • Format Disk/Partition • Create/Remove Sub Directories • Rename File/Partition/Header • Change Current Partition/Subdirectory*

**MCOPY** A two drive whole disk/partition file copier which supports CMD storage devices and Commodore 1541, 71, 81 disk drives.

**BCOPY+** A powerful backup/restore utility which backs up any CMD device or partition to a 1541, 71, 81 drive or CMD FD Series floppy drive. This new version incorporates the ability to dump an entire CMD device to an HD Series hard drive.

**FIND** Searches specified partitions on CMD devices for files that match a user defined filename pattern. Includes handy printer/screen toggle.

**DIR SORT** Alphabetizing utility for 1541, 71, 81 drives and all CMD storage devices makes it easy to organize large directories.

**MCOMPARE** Two drive disk compare utility makes it easy to evaluate the accuracy of a CMD partition against a disk copy.

**FOLLOW LINKS** Helps to locate and remove corrupt files.

**CONVERT 41<71** Converts between 1541 & 71 formats. Allows increased storage on 1541 disks after MCOPY'ing to 1571 or partition.

**ZAP REU/DACC** Clears memory in REU or RAMLink DACC partition.

**HD POWER TOOLS** Allows editing of CMD Device Partition Table.

**REBUILD PDIR** Helps to recover partitions after completely recreating the system on CMD Devices.

**Shareware Utilities Included:**

**DEDIT64/128, SuperDEDIT64/128** Sort or manually edit directories subdirectories and partitions on 1541, 71, 81 drives and all CMD Devices.

## NEW LOWER PRICES

### RAMLink

RAMLink with 0 MB RAMCard	\$199.95
RAMLink with 1 MB RAMCard	\$229.95
RAMLink with 4 MB RAMCard	\$329.95
Real-Time-Clock for RAMCard (Optional)	\$20.00
RAMLink Battery Back-up (Optional)	\$24.95
1 MB & 4 MB SIMM Modules	CALL
Parallel Cable (RAMLink to HD)	\$14.95

### RAMDrive

RAMDrive 1 MB	\$249.95
RAMDrive 2 MB	\$299.95

### HD-Series Hard Disk Drives

HD-40, (Special Edition w/ 85 MB Drive)	\$495.00
HD-100, (Special Edition w/ 170 MB Drive)	\$595.00
HD-200, (Special Edition w/ 245 MB Drive)	\$695.00

### FD-Series 3.5", Floppy Disk Drives

FD-2000 (800K and 1.6 MB Formats)	\$179.95
FD-4000 (800K, 1.6 MB and 3.2 MB Formats)	\$249.95
FD Real-Time-Clock Option	\$20.00
Box of 10, High Density Disks (1.6MB)	\$14.95
Box of 10, Enhanced Density Disks (3.2 MB)	\$60.00
Single ED-Disk (3.2 MB)	\$8.00

### JiffyDOS (Specify Computer/drive model & serial number)

C64-System (Computer & drive)	\$49.95
SX-64 System (Computer & Internal 1541)	\$49.95
C-128 System (Computer & drive)	\$59.95
128-D System (Computer & Internal 1571)	\$59.95
Additional Drive ROM's	\$24.95

### Software Products

geoMakeBoot (Makes bootable copies of GEOS 64/128)	\$12.95
gateWay/64 or 128 (GEOS Desktop Replacement)	\$29.95
geoCarvas (Alternative GEOS Paint Program)	\$29.95
Collette Utilities (Handy GEOS Utilities)	\$19.95
Perfect Print LQ for GEOS (Font Col. 1&2, 49 Fonts)	\$49.95
Font Collection 3 (17 Fonts and 5 Borders)	\$19.95
Border Font Collection 1 (24 Border Fonts)	\$19.95
JiffyMON - ML Monitor for JiffyDOS/64	\$19.95
CMD Utilities - Collection of Powerful Disk Utilities	\$24.95

### Miscellaneous CMD Products

SwiftLink, RS-232 Interface (300 to 38,400 baud)	\$39.95
SwiftLink Cable (DB9 to DB25)	\$9.95
SID Symphony Stereo Cartridge w/ Player	\$39.95
All prices and specifications subject to change without notice	



### High Performance SCSI Hard Drive for the C64 & C128

HD Series Hard Drives are available in capacities up to 200 MB, are fully partitionable, and can emulate 1541, 1571, & 1581 disks while Native partitions utilize MSDOS-style subdirectories. HD's connect easily to the serial bus or parallel via RAMLink. Includes built-in JiffyDOS, SWAP feature and Real-Time-Clock. HD Series Drives offer superior compatibility with most commercial software including BBS, Productivity and GEOS. And with new pricing, HD Series drives offer the lowest cost/MB of any C64/128 storage device.



### Power Backed Expandable RAM Disk and Interface

The fastest possible form of storage, RAMLink provides instant access to files and retains data while your computer is turned off. Easy to use and expandable up to 16 MB, RAMLink utilizes the same powerful operating system found in the HD. RAMLink also offers built-in JiffyDOS, SWAP feature, reset button, enable/disable switch, pass-thru port and RAM port for REU/GEORAM use. Ideal for those requiring maximum speed, expandability and compatibility with all types of software and hardware including GEOS.



### High Capacity 1.6 and 3.2 MB 3.5" Floppy Disk Drives

The FD-2000 and FD-4000 disk drives utilize today's latest 3.5 inch technology. FD-2000's support 800K (1581 style) and 1.6 MB (High Density) formats, while the FD-4000's offer support for the 3.2 MB (Enhanced Density) format as well. Fast and reliable, they support 1541, 1571 and 1581 style partitions, Native Mode partitioning and can actually read and write 1581 disks. FD's feature built-in JiffyDOS, SWAP button and optional RTC. High capacity, speed and compatibility make the FD right for every application, including GEOS.



### JiffyDOS Speeds up disk access by as much as 1500% while maintaining 100% compatibility with commercial software

- Speeds up Loading, Saving, Verifying, Formatting and Reading/Writing of PRG, SEQ, USR and REL files
- Built-in DOS Wedge plus 17 additional features including file copier, text dump, printer toggle, and redefinable function keys
- ROM upgrade installs easily into most computers and disk drives. Supports C-64, 64C, SX-64, C-128, 128-D, 1541, 1541C, 1541-II, 1571, 1581 and more. 128 system supports both 64 and 128 modes and upgraded Kernel routines.

#### Shipping and Handling Charges:

Hard Drives: UPS \$15.00; 2nd-day \$25.00; AK, HI, Canada \$35.00  
RAMLink, RAMDrive, FD: UPS \$9.00; 2nd-day \$16.00; AK, HI, Canada \$20.00  
GW, PPLQ, JDOS, SID, SL: UPS \$5.50; 2 day \$10.00; AK, HI, Canada \$15.00  
GBoot, Col. Util, GCarr, CMD Util: 1st Class Mail \$2.00; Canada \$5.00  
All Foreign Orders: Call  
Payment: MC, Visa, Money Order or Bank Check. COD shipments add \$5.00  
COD's may require advanced deposit. Personal checks are held for 3 wks.

### Creative Micro Designs, Inc.

P.O. Box 646, E. Longmeadow, MA 01028

Orders: (800) 638-3263

Info: (413) 525-0023

BBS: (413) 525-0148

Office Hours: 9 AM to 5 PM, EST, Monday thru Friday.



# THE BACK PAGE

by Jeffrey L. Jones



I've done a lot of things, but I've never envisioned myself editing a newsletter. Needless to say, I'm not an expert at it, and probably won't ever be. When Fender suggested we have someone outside of *LOADSTAR* edit the newsletter, I held up my finger and said, "I can do it!" Many sleepless nights later I find myself with a *CANON BJ-5* Bubble Jet printer (a

\$229 device which printed this newsletter and will be reviewed next month) and a host of DTP stuff I've never had to bother with before.

Bear with me as I explore this new world of desktop publishing. I'm not sure I'm settled on the type or size of the basic font for the newsletter. We realize that many of our readers are retired, and this font may be a bit too small for those of you who might be far-sighted. Is it too small? let us know! Bear in mind that if the font grows, the contents may shrink!

As my horizons expand, I hope your horizons are expanded by the extra information that previously couldn't be included in *LOADSTAR*. Use *FEEDBACK MACHINE* to give us your suggestions, praise and criticisms, and if you have and news you'd like to share with us, include that! If you think the *LOADSTAR LETTER* is a flop, let us know. If you have *geoPAINT* or *DOODLE!* cartoons to include, by all means, submit them!

You've probably noticed the ads by now, and I shamelessly implore you to consider a classified ad. In the past we've never actively sought out sponsors. Since we have to produce thousands of these newsletters and mail them, it's quite a financial undertaking. Your participation, and the participation of our sponsors will determine the frequency of this periodical. We want this newsletter to remain free to *LOADSTAR* subscribers, but we also want it to become self-sustaining. But of course in order for ads to be worth anything to our sponsors, you have to be responsive and purchase computer-related items. You can make an extra buck, and help out the newsletter by placing your classified ad.

Commodore participation remains low as it has always been. The developers that remain with Commodore have had their baptism of fire and should be given their due. In a market that's seen a number of *IBM*, *MAC*, *APPLE*, *COMMODORE*, and even two *AMIGA* models declared officially obsolete in the past decade, the C-64 is the only computer that exists as it did ten years ago. That, in itself, isn't a good thing. It reflects upon the stupidity of *CBM*, that they have developed the most successful computer in history -- and have tried their level best to ignore it. Other computers have come a long way in a decade, I'll admit, and there are computers out there that are effectively twenty times faster than your C-64, but there you are, reading a defiant editorial from one of the longest-running computer publications in the world -- and it's for a C-64.



## GRAFIX GALORE

Original Printshop Graphics

Over 80 super graphics to add sparkle to your Printshop projects! Everything from sports to spys and pirates to pizza.

Send \$11.95 (inc. s/h) add \$3 if outside N. America. Specify C-64 or IBM version.

— REQUIRES PRINTSHOP OR GRAPHICS COMPATIBLE PROG. —

C-64

CLIP ART CUPBOARD

IBM

P. O. BOX 317774 • CINCINNATI, OH 45231

### DEPENDABLE SERVICE FOR YOUR COMMODORE!

C-64, 1541, C-128, or 1571: **FAST TURNAROUND!**

**\$25.00 PLUS PARTS**

Send computer\* or drive with name, address, phone, & describe problem. We'll call with parts estimate, then repair and return to you insured by UPS. Payment can be CDD or VISA, M/C. Minimum charge, estimate only is \$20. \*Include power supply.

AUTHORIZED COMMODORE  
SERVICE CENTER  
\*\*\*\*\*  
90 DAY WARRANTY  
ON ALL REPAIRS

**TYCOM Inc.**

503 East St. Dept. C  
Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 442-9771

### COMPUTER REPAIR



**C-64: \$40.00 1541: \$54.95 64C: \$50.00**  
**1541-II: \$64.95 C128: \$64.95 C128D: \$74.95**  
**1581: \$64.95 ETC....**

WE ALSO REPAIR IBM Clones, Sega, Genesis, Nintendo

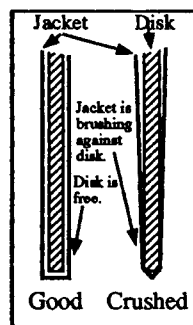
For more info call: **BEAR TECHNOLOGIES**

Computer Sales, Service & Repair  
1005 McKean Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148  
215-336-5295 1-800-755-5295

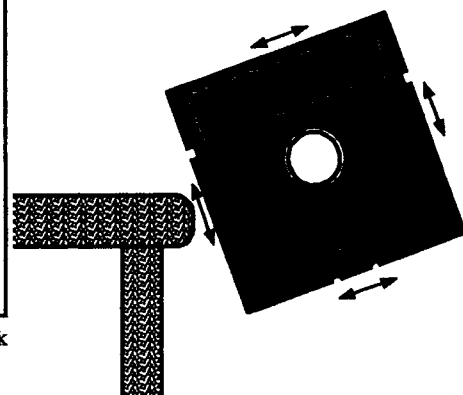


## DISK TROUBLE?

Every copy of *LOADSTAR* leaves Softdisk as a verified okay disk set. Unfortunately some disks may become crushed in the mail and give **READ ERRORS**. Fixing these crushed disks is quite easy. Just run the areas indicated along a hard edge such as a table. This should uncrimp the disk.



Cross-section of disk



*LOADSTAR LETTER* is published monthly by Softdisk Publishing as a companion to *LOADSTAR* magazine for the Commodore 64. Jeffrey L. Jones Editor. Al Vekovius Publisher. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced without the permission of Softdisk Publishing, P.O. Box 30008, Shreveport, LA 71101, (318) 221-8718.